

For Internal Use Only
EPA internal update: September 8, 2015 1400 ET
HQ EOC Tues/Thurs reporting cycle

GOLD KING MINE RELEASE MANAGEMENT REPORT



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Situation Summary

Overview: On August 5, a large release of mine wastewater into Cement Creek occurred while an EPA site assessment team was conducting site investigation activities. Loose material collapsed into the cave entry and pressurized water began leaking above the mine tunnel, spilling an estimated three million gallons of water stored behind the collapsed material into Cement Creek, a tributary of the Animas River. The release's path flowed through three of EPA's Regions: Region 8—Colorado, Utah and the Southern Ute Tribe; Region 6—New Mexico; and, Region 9—Navajo Nation. The mine water is being treated in a series of four settling ponds constructed near the portal. Aerial reconnaissance combined with observations on the ground indicate that the plume associated with the Gold King Mine release has dissipated in downstream sections of the San Juan River and Lake Powell.

Public Website: A public-facing website has been created for the response: <http://www2.epa.gov/goldkingmine>. Press releases, sampling data, fact sheets and other information are being posted to the website. See below for information that has been posted to the site for this operational period.

EPA Public Information Number: EPA has a public information number through the National Call Center (844-607-9700) that is now being operated by EPA HQ. To total of 225 calls were received during its operation by the former United EPA Area Command (UEAC).

Response Organization: The HQ EOC activated to Level 1 Operations on August 11. EPA Regions 6, 8 and 9 are integrated into an Incident Command Post Gold King (ICPGK) in Durango, CO. The ICPGK is monitoring drinking water sampling, collecting sampling results and disseminating these results within Regions 8, 6 and 9. Lastly, the ICPGK continues to host visits from officials from Colorado, Utah, EPA Region 8 and the Navajo Nation.

ICPGK finalized the *Gold King Mine Stakeholder Notification Plan* to notify stakeholders throughout the entire watershed in Regions 6, 8 and 9 of any mine related activities that could potentially impact the watershed. The final plan will be posted to the EPA Gold King Mine Release website. The plan, in its current form, will remain in effect as long as work is ongoing at the Gold King Mine site.

Summary of Water/Food Deliveries by EPA Region: The table below shows the number of deliveries and quantity (in gallons) of water and food deliveries by EPA Regions to date.

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Region</u>	<u>September 6</u>			<u>Cumulative</u>		
		<u>Deliveries</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Quantity</u> (Hay Bales)	<u>Deliveries</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Quantity</u> (Hay Bales)
Potable Water	Region 8	0	0			62,000	

Deliveries							
Livestock/Agricultural Water Deliveries	Region 8	0	0		47	141,980	
	Region 6				59	1,104,990	
	Region 9	0	0		13	218,400	
	BIA**	0	0		7	975,888	
Agricultural Food Deliveries	Region 6				1		244
	Region 9	0	0	0	14		5,376

* Water deliveries in Region 9 are being handled by the Navajo Tribal Utility Authority; ** Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) delivered water for livestock to seven locations in the Navajo Nation from approximately August 12 to August 31.

Summary of Sampling by EPA Region: The table below shows the number of samples collected by EPA Regions for each matrix to date (Note: private drinking water wells in Region 9 have not been sampled):

<u>Matrix</u>	<u>Region</u>	<u>Number of Samples on September 6</u>	<u>Cumulative for Response*</u>
Private Drinking Water	Region 8	2	366
	Region 6	0	285
Surface Water	Region 8	7	392
	Region 6	9	330
	Region 9	0	239
Sediment	Region 8	5	154
	Region 6	9	343
	Region 9	0	192

*Compiled from the SCRIBE database

Region 8 (Durango, CO)

Highlights: The Region 8 Administrator, Shaun McGrath, and Doug Ammon, Chief of the Site Assessment and Remedy Decisions Branch in OSRTI, met with the LaPlata County Commissioners on September 3 to discuss Superfund and NPL listing.

Drinking Water Sampling: Region 8 continues to deliver water and assess the water systems of residences with MCL exceedances. Region 8 is focusing efforts on those private drinking water wells located within 300 feet of the banks of the Animas River (including

connected canals), between Baker's Bridge and the Colorado/New Mexico state line. Region 8 is also providing bottled water services to three residences.

Surface Water & Sediment Sampling: Region 8 continues to operate treatment and sedimentation ponds at the mine site which are treating water by lowering acidity levels and removing dissolved metals. Treated water from the last treatment pond is discharging into Cement Creek. On September 7, EPA recorded a flow rate of 624 gallons per minute and a pre-treatment pH of 3.40 from the Gold King Mine adit portal. Bolts and wire mesh are being installed in and around the adit/portal to the Gold King Mine in an effort to stabilize the area.

Irrigation Ditch Sampling: Irrigation ditches drawing from the Animas River in Colorado are now open and available for use.

Region 6 (Farmington, NM)

Highlights: EPA has sent the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) validated data for the following:

- Surface water sampling analytical data from August 6 – 25;
- Intake sediment sampling analytical data from August 10 – 27;
- Irrigation ditch sediment sampling analytical data from August 13 – 14; and
- Private well data from August 10 – 14, August 19 – 21, and August 24 – 25.

Drinking Water Sampling: Region 6 completed private water well sampling on August 27. Seven private wells that had an MCL or EPA Regional Screening Level exceedances were either attributed to background concentrations or were not related to the Gold King Mine Release.

Surface Water & Sediment Sampling: EPA continues to collect water quality samples from nine locations in the river near intakes for the Aztec, Farmington, Lower Valley Water Users Association, Morningstar Water Supply System and the North Star Water User Association.

Irrigation Ditch Sampling: The irrigation ditch sampling effort has been completed.

Region 9 (Shiprock, NM)

Highlights: Navajo law enforcement representatives are unable to support sampling on a daily basis, so sampling will be scaled back to Mondays and Thursdays after August 29.

Drinking Water Sampling: Region 9 is not sampling private drinking water wells at this time.

Surface Water & Sediment Sampling: Starting on August 31, the number of sample locations was reduced to five and are being sampled twice weekly.

Agriculture/Livestock: On September 3, an OSC and START contractors conducted an assessment of 11 out of the 15 black steel tanks located on the Navajo Reservation for livestock watering. On September 4, five tanks were demobilized by an ERRS contractor.

EPA Headquarters

The HQ EOC has been activated at Level 1 Operations for this incident. HQ EOC tasks include:

- assistance to the UEAC with staffing and funding needs;
- coordination among EPA Regions, laboratories and HQ national program offices;
- participation in data calls to assist with interpretation of water and sediment data; and
- exploration of various authorities and funding sources that might be available in responding to this incident.

On September 4, Mathy Stanislaus, OSWER AA, traveled to Durango, CO to meet with San Juan and La Plata County Commissioners. He also conducted a press interview.

HQ EOC EU: The EOC EU is discussing the need to transition from emergency response to long-term monitoring with regional EUs, ORD, and OW. Regions 6, 8 and 9 anticipate reducing surface water and sediment sampling. No date has been set for this transition. The EOC EU is also working with the EOC PIO to post data trend graphs for additional metal analytes to the EPA Gold King Mine website.

HQ EOC Water: A new draft long-term monitoring plan has been shared with internal EPA stakeholders but has not yet been released to the public. In addition, A GeoPlatform map that shows the historical stations that are co-located or nearby has been developed for internal EPA use.

HQ EOC OGC: EOC OGC continues to provide a review of publically-released information.

HQ EOC PIO: EOC PIO has/is:

- Sent out the most updated version of approved media responses to press officers in HQ, JIC and Region 8;
- Coordinating with JIC to follow up with press and public inquiries;
- Updating the website to correct for errors;

- Reviewing new data sets for posting;
- Creating messaging for the upload of 576 graphs of trending concentrations of metals in surface water; and
- Preparing Q&As for a Congressional hearing.

HQ EOC Finance: EOC Finance reviewed timecards for EPA staff working in the EOC to ensure accurate account charging. EOC Finance is also working with ICPGK on additional funding support.

Other HQ Activities: The Environmental Response Team (ERT) continues to provide support to the regions and HQ EOC on water treatment optimization and groundwater sampling plans. ERT staff will serve as Health and Safety Officers in Durango, CO through September 15.

NUMBER OF PERSONNEL INVOLVED:

<u>Region/Function</u>	<u>EPA Personnel</u>	<u>EPA Contractors</u>	<u>Coast Guard Personnel</u>	<u>Other Federal, State, Local and Tribal Entities</u>	<u>Total</u>
Mine	3	8	4	0	15
ICPGK	27	24	3	2	56
Region 6	0	5	0	0	5
Region 9	0	0	0	0	0
HQ EOC	13	1	0	0	14
Total	43	38	7	2	90

*HQ EOC numbers reflect personnel supporting the response during the current operational period. Regional numbers reflect personnel responding to the incident on September 8.

FINANCE:

<i>Estimated Response Support Costs as of September 6</i>					
<u>Region</u>	<u>EPA Cumulative Expended Payroll</u>	<u>EPA Cumulative Expended Travel</u>	<u>EPA Cumulative Other Charges</u>	<u>Cumulative Contract Costs</u>	<u>Total Cumulative Costs Expended</u>
Region 8	\$801,927	\$164,793	\$44,450	\$2,721,936	\$3,733,106
Region 6	\$490,762	\$124,750	\$12,989	\$2,410,163	\$3,038,664

Region 9	\$554,400	\$83,000	\$0	\$900,506	\$1,537,906
TOTAL	\$1,847,089	\$372,543	\$57,439	\$6,032,605	\$8,309,676

<i>Estimated Burn Rates as of September 6</i>	
Region	Estimated Daily Burn Rate
Region 8	\$129,560
Region 6	\$41,990
Region 9	\$60,816
TOTAL	\$232,366

*Calculations have been revised to more accurately reflect daily burn rates.